

Parking in Lexington



The Problems & Desired Outcomes

When people don't come to Lexington Center because they perceive they may not find parking – we have a problem.

The Town's Parking Management Group is working to develop new programs, policies, and infrastructure to increase the parking supply & make it easier to park in Lexington Center. We want to promote longer stays, boost merchant and restaurant business, and make it a lively place!

What is the Parking Problem?

The Town struggles to balance parking for short- and long-term users in Lexington Center. For example, shoppers and lunch-goers compete daily for valuable parking with employees, tourists, and commuters. In addition, there is poor signage to indicate where lots are located and outdated meter technology that limits payments to coins. When parking is difficult or perceived to be difficult we earn a bad reputation and people will avoid the Center.



Employees Compete with Customers for Parking

The lack of long-term parking in peripheral areas contributes to the competition of parking spaces with short-term users (parking for less than 2 hours). Currently there is a three-year wait list for 180 business parking permits. Employees often park at prime retail-customer spaces if there are no alternatives. They feed the meters or move their cars burning gas and time circling for spaces. During the weekday lunch hours parking is extremely limited.



Payment Methods are Outdated

Our meters accept only quarters; they do not incorporate new technology to offer options to easily pay by credit card or smart phone. In addition, payment for a public parking permit is limited to a lump-sum annual payment that eliminates the option for seasonal use.

Current Pricing Does Not Reflect Value

The price of public parking is not adjusted to reflect the location or desirability. Motorists typically pay the same hourly price for the Center's most popular and convenient parking spaces as they do for parking further out. In addition, the average public parking permit costs \$230 per year compared to \$840 for a comparable space in a private lot.



Difficult and Confusing to Find Parking Lots

Given the historic layout of our Town Center, our public parking lots are located behind buildings which is visually very pleasing yet difficult to find. Also, once inside a lot it is often difficult to negotiate the traffic as a motorist and as a pedestrian. We should explore improving the signage, web info, and pedestrian connections to, from, and within the lots.



People Avoid the Center If They Cannot Easily Find Parking

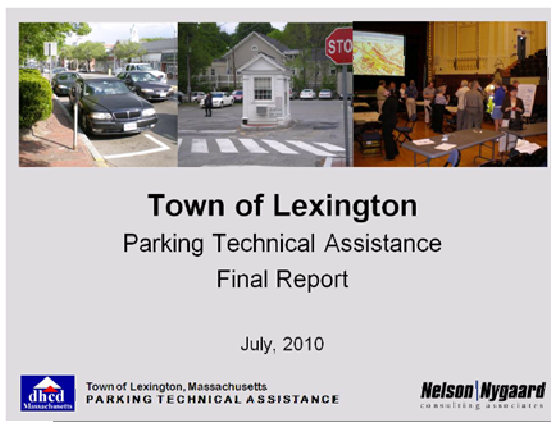
If people feel there is a parking problem and avoid coming to the Center, we lose business and inhibit street life. We want to promote longer stays, boost merchant and restaurant business, and make it a lively place!

What we are trying to accomplish ...

Advance Previous Studies

In 2010, the Nelson Nygaard consultants completed the Town of Lexington Parking Technical Assistance Report. The report documented that the Center's peak parking demand occurs during the weekday hours between 11-2pm. The report noted the low price of hourly meter rates and permits contributes to the high demand in desirable/most convenient spaces. And the report also recommended several policy changes as well as improved signage and pricing changes. The report can be found on the Town's website at:

www.lexingtonma.gov/planning/documents.cfm



Parking Management

When a community faces parking problems a common response is to say, "let's build more parking." This approach generally requires millions of tax dollars to acquire land, potentially demolish buildings, and construct a lot or structure.

However, another approach for addressing parking issues focuses on improving the management of the existing inventory. It explores how to enhance capacity, create efficiencies, and improve infrastructure. This approach looks at users needs, price, payment options, and signage, including alternative modes of transportation to improve access and availability of parking. It is this approach the Parking Management Group advocates and expects will yield results in the Center.



Parking Management Solutions

The Lexington Center Committee, dedicated to enhancing the vitality of the Center, created a subcommittee composed of business owners and residents, known as the Parking Management Group [PMG]. Over the next year the PMG hopes to accomplish the following:

- Create mix of payment options & availability to encourage visitors
- Move long-term parking users out from high-demand areas
- Promote Lexington Center as a place that is accessible and accommodating to all modes of travel
- Increase parking capacity & circulation in lots and nearby streets
- Improve signage, parking info, & incentives for alternative modes of transportation



How will we go about doing it?

The Parking Management Group [PMG] presented this document to the Board of Selectmen and received their unanimous agreement of the current parking challenges as outlined and supported the PMG to move forward.

The PMG will next select a consultant to collect current data on Center parking demand, including conducting a robust survey of users – from shoppers and lunch-goers to employees, tourists, and commuters.

Working with Center stakeholders and community members, the consultants will to develop options for implementation that address changes to the existing conditions, the associated costs, and estimated timelines. This phase is expected to include an education and outreach component that has public meetings,

workshops, and an interactive web presence.

The PMG and the consultant will collaborate to develop implementation plan alternatives and present these to the public and the Board of Selectmen for their review and feedback.

Finally, the Selectmen would approve the final implementation plan and the Town will implement the selected plan. PMG will include methods to benchmark success and provide that a on-going parking management system be in place.

Want More Information & Get Involved?

Contact: Melisa Tintocalis, “Parking Champion” & Economic Development Director

Phone: 781-862-0500 ext. 257

Email: mtintocalis@lexingtonma.gov

Website: www.lexingtonma.gov/committees/lcc.cfm

Online Forum: www.LexEngage.com